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Editorial

- 1 This special thematic issue of the BMS is the result of a joint effort with the Methods Thematic Network ("Réseau Thématique" or RT in French) of the "Association Française de Sociologie" (AFS). "RT Methodes" and the BMS encouraged and organized the analysis of all the abstracts of over 1,000 presentations made at the AFS' first congress a year ago, in February 2004. These four research articles will serve as the basis for a 25 February 2005 RT Methodes public conference to discuss these results and eventually produce a book-length work based on the conference and further development of these contributions.
- 2 In the first research article, "Text-Analysis Programs Serving Sociological Innovation", Didier Demazière, head of RT Methodes, presents this research project and the three following research articles which employ four different text-analysis computer programs applied to the same corpus of AFS congress abstracts.
- 3 In "The Program Prospéro Tried Out Against A Corpus of Sociological Abstracts", Patrick Trabal uses the program Prospéro to show the importance of coding before analyzing the adjustment or fit between the abstracts of presentations and each RT's call for papers. He then analyzes the fit between all the RTs, based on the abstracts of their sessions, and shows that only a few RTs bring together texts sharing similar characteristics.
- 4 In "Cartography of the First Congress of the AFS Using the Method of Associated Words", Mathilde de Saint Léger and Karl M. van Meter use the program Calliope to produce two-dimensional maps -- external ties (centrality) by internal ties (density) -- of the entire corpus. Maps are then produced for the dominant RTs and compared with those of the entire corpus to analyze their contributions, their conflicts and their cooperation or reinforcement.
- 5 In "What Do Sociologists Talk About When Meeting in Conference? Complementary Aspects of an Open Lexical Analysis and an Accumulation of Closed Variables", Gérard Boudesseul uses the program Alceste to analyze lexical similarity and dissimilarity among the abstracts of this corpus. He then applies the Trideux factorial correspondence analysis method and then compares the results with those of Alceste, describing the points of common accord and those of disagreement between the two methods.